

conditions for trained nurses, and said that through the Central Registration Committee with Lord Ampthill as its chairman, English, Scottish and Irish nurses' organisations in conjunction with the British Medical Association, have now agreed upon one Bill and that if time were given by Parliament, the second reading of this Bill would go through like a bird. She referred to the lack of opposition in the meeting as indicating the general feeling throughout the nursing profession in favour of professional organization by the State, and attributed the fact that nurses had not been able to secure professional status sooner to their lack of direct political influence.

Another important factor in the opposition to just economic conditions for trained nurses was their difficult and dependent earning capacity. No class of women workers were more exploited than trained nurses by financiers and philanthropic employers. She regarded it as immoral for institutions to take half of the earnings of a working woman even for a charitable purpose.

Trained nurses themselves forming part of the State have the right to demand that they shall be justly treated by the State as a whole, that by Act of Parliament their training schools shall be compelled to provide efficient education, and that when they have given evidence to an independent central authority of their skill and character their names and qualifications shall be registered and their skilled work protected.

SOME LEGAL POINTS FOR NURSES.

Mr. A. M. Brioe, barrister-at-law, then spoke on the above question. His interesting address was dealt with at some length in our issue of May 4th.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

The paper which was undoubtedly the most brilliant one of the Conference, was that by Miss M. O. Haydon on Woman Suffrage, which claimed that since the first Bill for extending the franchise to women was introduced into Parliament in 1870, little resulted save majorities in the House of Commons for the second reading, subsequent burying of the measure, and a gradually widening circle of its advocates who were perhaps too timid and anxious, too fearful of haste and rapid evolution, too conservative and over conscious of common prejudices. Meanwhile, various forces were fostering the growth of the woman question, and a group of women weary of the shackles of tutelage, weary of promises of freedom, weary of being nursed and soothed, saw that if this question was to become one of practical politics the public conscience must be aroused, the people must know of the claim of women for citizenship and representation, the woman's point of view must be declared by women; shaking themselves free from tradition, prejudice, and timidity, women must impose upon the individual, the State, the nation, the world, the duty of considering this—to them—the greatest reform of society and government—the granting of the

vote to women—the symbol of liberty, freedom, and citizenship.

I do not, said Miss Haydon, propose to touch upon the pros and cons of the militant and constitutional methods of securing women's franchise, but rather to put before you the reasons which inspire both in this struggle; but there is only one opinion possible as to what transformed this academic question into one of everyday interest, that brought it into the region of practical politics and that is the courageous, independent, enthusiastic,—fanatical, if you will—agitation of the last few years.

Miss Haydon contended that the demand for the vote is a natural outcome of the awakening of women; education has brought them a wider outlook, greater knowledge of the world, a sense of their own powers. Those in the labour market, and there are over three million of these in Great Britain, see the gradually increasing tendency of the State to regulate industrial conditions, see that the women's point of view is often ignored, or through ignorance treated with scant justice by men, see that women's labour is underpaid, in certain instances disgracefully underpaid, and that the State has power to legislate for women-workers as it would for children or slaves.

The speaker pointed out the many urgent reasons for which women need the vote: as trained nurses, that we may express ourselves on State Registration and on questions affecting the health of the community; as working women that we may do our part in the claim for a living wage—a minimum wage; as social workers to wipe out the white slave traffic, to protect young girls, to relieve the single mother of the double burden of the illegitimate child, to save those women who from awful necessity are driven to earn their living in what has been termed the best paid profession of women—prostitution, to amend the marriage and divorce laws, to alleviate some of the ills arising out of economic dependence; such are some of the questions that need women's brave tackling.

Miss Haydon concluded by saying that women want the vote because in Government the interests of women demand the special gifts of women; because they feel the disabilities of non-representation; because given this weapon they would make life for their fellows less tragic, hard and uneven.

After this the paper by Miss Blomfield, of the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage, read by Mrs. Moberly Bell, which took the form of a hypothetical conversation between a nurse and the husband of one of her patients, came as an anti-climax.

The conversation opened by the husband enquiring of the nurse: "Don't you wish you were a man?" To which the nurse replied in the negative and the conversation proceeded on a plane of the same level. The audience bore it with what patience they might. When, however, the reader of the paper asked her audience to remember that a man, Charles Dickens, founded

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